

Jane Hutt AS/MS
Y Dirprwy Weinidog a'r Prif Chwip
Deputy Minister and Chief Whip



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref JH-/00459/20

Janet Finch-Saunders MS
Chair, Petitions Committee

20 July 2020

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 29 June, in which you enclosed the Petitions Committee Report on petition P-05-798, Male Domestic Violence Victim support services to be independently run and funded.

The Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act ensures relevant authorities and organisations work to a shared, collective strategic vision which will move Wales towards a more consistent response which victims tell us is crucial. It will raise the issue of gender-based abuse, domestic abuse and sexual violence with our most senior leadership and place a responsibility on them to drive forward changes which improves the safety of all victims, including men and women and their children.

The Welsh Government recognises that the experience of men and women of all forms of abuse can be different and therefore requires a different response. The Act therefore requires a nuanced response to men and to women, reflecting their different experience and requiring an appropriate response which properly addresses their needs.

Local strategies, provision for which is included in the Act, must be based on a robust needs assessment by Local Authorities and Local Health Boards for their areas which will identify where men and women require different services and support. Services must be provided which meet the needs and experiences of men and women, and which acknowledge the different services these groups require and are proportionate to need. The Act will, therefore, enable a gender-specific response where necessary.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

The Welsh Government has also published statutory commissioning guidance which requires regional commissioning partnerships to work strategically to commission needs-based services. Where there is a need for support services for male victims of domestic abuse, regional commissioning arrangements should recognise this.

The commissioning cycles and rules governing the commissioning of services will vary between organisations and between regions. Where services are being procured, public sector organisations must adhere to public procurement rules.

In recognition more specifically male victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence, the Welsh Government funds Project Dyn which supports male victims.

Project Dyn provides frontline advocacy support for men, as well as telephone and web-based support and signposting to local services. The Project also delivers training and works to raise awareness across Wales about the issue and how best to support men in these circumstances. In addition, Welsh Government funded services, such as the Live Fear Free website, Live Fear Free Helpline and Bawso, support both men and women.

Whilst we understand the importance of reviewing all of our grant funded programmes from time to time, we feel that during a global pandemic it is not the appropriate time for the funding to be reviewed.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Hutt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line above the first few letters.

Jane Hutt AS/MS

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